

## THE HAYTI HERALD

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## THE CONFIDENCE GAME.

When the confidence man, the hypocritical wolf in sheep's clothes, starts out to do his fellow creature, his chief dependence is upon flattery. He believes, and not without evidence, that the compliment, or more properly speaking in such cases, flattery, is the skeleton key that unlocks every heart and opens every pocketbook. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the preacher," and on this world-old truth the system of the hypocritical flatterer is built.

To say that all men love praise is a good crop estimate, so to speak, of human weakness. As a matter of frank truth, all of us do love praise; every one of us can be flattered; every mother's son and daughter of us are amenable to the soothing influence of compliment, but few of us are so egotistical as to care for flattery that is open, unblushing and inexhaustible. It must be applied, to be agreeable, sparingly and judiciously, as if it were a precious ointment—not thrown at us with a scoop shovel, as if it were a substance so sweet and adhesive that some of it could be trusted to stick.

The artistic flatterer also scores in having a nice sense of appropriateness. When he means to play upon our vanity he does not meet us on the street and, apropos of nothing, pass us a compliment as if he were offering us a cigar, or as if inviting us to have a glass of grape juice. He bides his time until he finds us in a receptive mood, and then he steers the conversation gently, imperceptibly, until he has gotten us in the middle of the stage. Then he turns the calcium light full upon us, and when he passes the flowers of speech across the footlights to us they seem so natural and spontaneous that we accept them without a word of protest.

Being past-master in this art, and knowing that mankind—which also includes womankind—is hungry for flattery, C. N. (Chameleon Natty) Walker of Critic fame, uses that gift of his oily tongue as a tool to reach his coveted graft, the same as a bank robber uses his jimmy to reach a bank's cash. His list of "Colonels" and "Captains," "the purest Christian we ever met," "the prettiest lady in the state" is too long to mention. Readers of his paper are familiar with those phrases. The application of such flattery to his intended victims is his stock in trade. He was always on the lookout for widow women who had collected their husband's life insurance, or who had by toil and economy saved a few dollars. While here he found several he tried to worm himself into the confidence of. He always had some flattering remark to make about them. One was the best looking in seven states, another the purest Christian, and so forth. Early after he came here, and soon after he fled the Caruthersville dross out of one hundred dollars, he discovered that "Aunt Mollie" White was the purest Christian and the best woman since Mother Eve. He knew that "Aunt Mollie's" hard earnings of years was drawing interest in the bank. He won her confidence to the fullest, but could never hatch a scheme to reach her cash until he moved to Piggott. Landing there, he wrote "Aunt Mollie" to visit his family. The good lady accepted the "hospitality(?)". She was shown a good time, and told how moral the town was, and incidentally, how mean Hayti was. Hayti was made out a "hell hole," and Piggott a heaven. Hayti was not a

fit place for so good a woman as "Aunt Mollie" to live. She should get out of the Sodom and Gomorrah and not even look back, or she would turn to a bag of salt. Near to Walker was a vacant house, the very thing for "Aunt Mollie" a new home. She could get it if she would act quick. She was introduced to a real estate agent. The house and lot was valued at \$1500, for which "Aunt Mollie" was to deed her home in this city and pay \$700. Walker held the deeds. When "Aunt Mollie" arrived home and told her sons of her investment, investigation was made. It developed that she had been swindled out of at least \$700. Still confiding in Walker, she thought he would return her deed and protect the "best and purest Christian woman he ever knew." She wrote Walker, and he replied that should he turn over her deed "they" would make HIM pay the whole thing. He didn't tell "Aunt Mollie" that nobody had ever yet succeeded in making him pay anything, and that he owes everybody that would trust him. Growing more suspicious, "Aunt Mollie" sent a lawyer over to see what could be done. She gave the lawyer \$10 for his expenses and he reported they would relinquish her deed upon payment of \$50. That is the amount of the holdup, but "Aunt Mollie" will do well to get out of it so lightly. Had the old grafter been able to keep her blinded, she would have likely been robbed of her last penny.

"Aunt Mollie" is a good woman, and all Walker says about her goodness is true. We have known her and her family for over twenty years. They have always been our best friends, but Walker succeeded in turning this good lady against her friends. That was the only way he could blind her. In the beginning he had her discontinue the Herald so she would not see the exposures made of him. She didn't

know when he left here he had just been caught bootlegging whiskey in New Madrid county, and where he also met "strange women." All that she ever knew about Walker was what he told her with his viperous, beguiling tongue, while his hideous personality and private life was hidden under the robe of morality, like the coil of a deadly serpent in the grass.

(To be continued.)

## STYLE.

Indifference to literary style is the vogue and has been for many years. Especially is it a fetch of modern swift journalism. It should not be so. The fact is that the great newspaper stories—the stories that have lived—are remembered because they were well written. And for precisely the same reason the notes of President Wilson in the Lusitania correspondence, especially the last one, will have high place in our state papers.

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be found in President Wilson's last note to Germany. Parents should insist on their children reading it and understanding it. For anyone having appreciation for literary style, the impression will be lasting.

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